

What I Have Learned:

- Incorporating dogs into the physical therapy process is a possibility and it is done in some therapy settings already.
- Physical Therapists see that there are possible benefits to incorporating dogs into the therapy setting.
- There is a lack of understanding in the general population about service dogs, what a service dog roles can be and general etiquette of how to act around a service dog.
- There is a need for public education about service animals and their rights.
- Entering into a new environment as an intern, allows you to make many new connections and is a valuable experience.
- My future career aspirations are achievable!



Why I Chose this Project:

I chose to do this project because I wanted to gain insight into the possible reality of my future career aspirations. I was excited at the opportunities and growth that becoming a volunteer trainer and an internship offered. This project aligned with my passions and overall aided in my personal and professional development.

4 Paws for Ability and Abilities First Experience



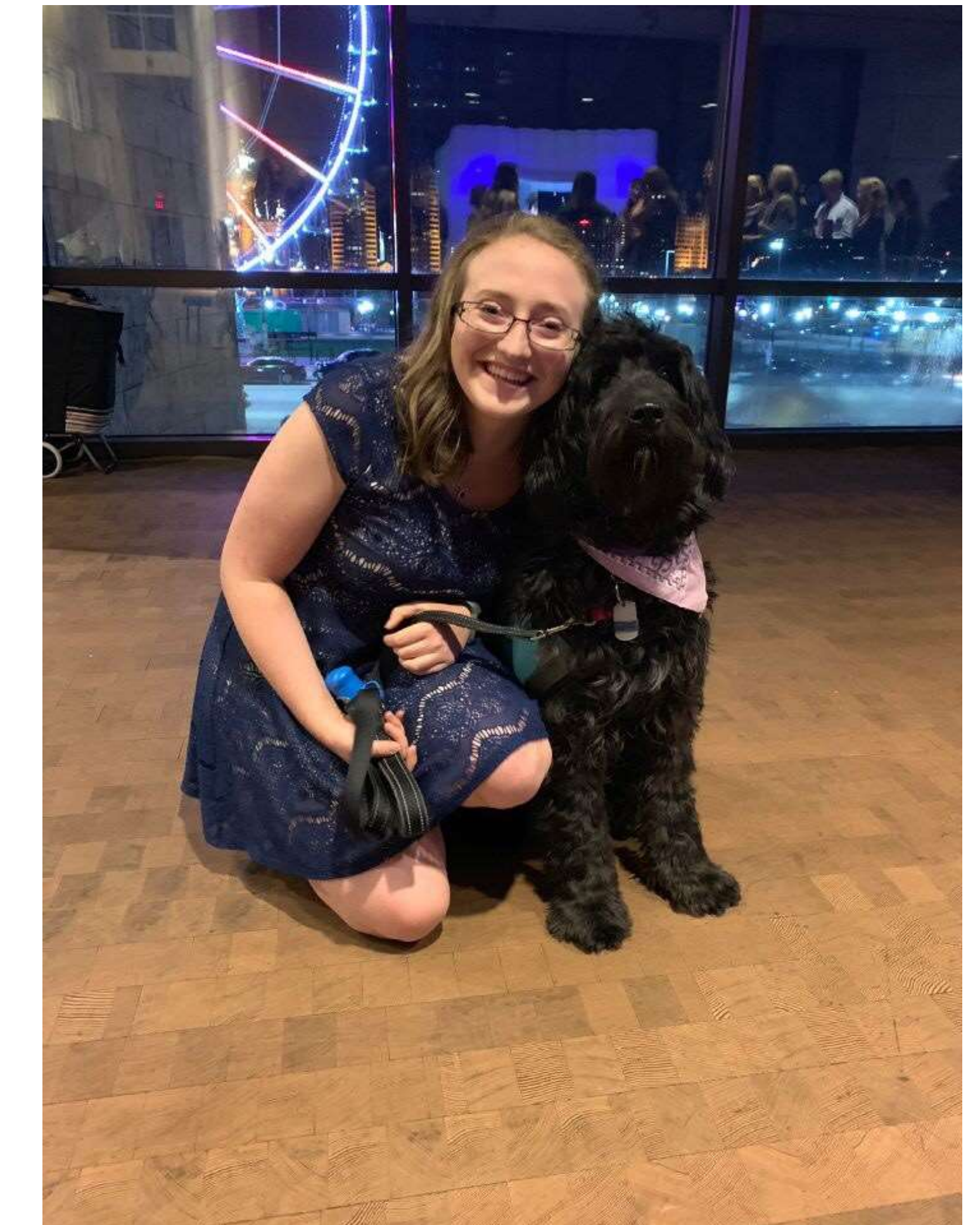
I worked as an Intern for 4 Paws for Ability in Xenia, Ohio and became a full-time volunteer training for this organization. This project expanded upon my Health Sciences Major and Disabilities Studies minor that I am working towards at Ohio State, while teaching me the process of training a service dog, and understanding the impact that they have for individuals with disabilities. Through observation at physical therapy clinic I saw where incorporating dogs into the therapy process could benefit the individuals and environment. This experience overall aided in my professional development.



Transformational Aspect:

- This project has given me immense insight in what my future career could look like and I see that it can be a reality.
- My view of the world has changed in that I have realized that the general public has a lack of education and understanding about service dogs.
- Allowing me to experience the lack of public understanding of service dogs has given me a passion and drive to educate others.
- My confidence has been boosted, and now I am comfortable talking to anyone that I come into contact with in public. I have become comfortable in having eyes on me where ever I go with my dog, and take the opportunity to educate others.
- I have a greater drive, passion, and excitement for my future career aspirations and life goals!

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STEP Project Category: Internship
STEP Faculty Advisor: Dr. Michelle Everson
Major: Health Sciences



My Favorite Part of this Experience...

I have enjoyed this experience in many aspects! Overall, my favorite part was becoming a volunteer trainer for 4 Paws for Ability. Raising and training Zeezu has been a wonderful experience! I would do it all over again if given the option!

Through becoming a volunteer trainer I have seen and heard the stories of the impact a service dog has on a child and veteran's life along with their families. These dogs change their lives, allow them to gain more independence, and gain a best friend in the process.

The socialization of a service dog in training is crucial to their ability to succeed as a service dog. Zeezu is wonderful and I have loved having her on my side since the beginning of May.



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Second-year Transformational
Experience Program